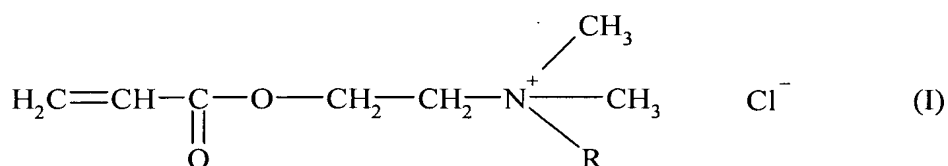


The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for ~~the manufacture of aqueous solutions~~ preparing an aqueous solution of unsaturated quaternary ammonium salts ~~corresponding to the following formula (I):~~ salt of formula I



in which R represents a methyl or benzyl radical, ~~by reaction,~~
comprising reacting, in the presence of water, of N,N-dimethyl-aminoethyl acrylate (DAMEA)
with a quaternizing agent of formula II ~~(II)~~:



in which R is as defined above,
wherein:

- (a) the reaction is carried out in a closed reactor, which comprises 5-60% of the amount by weight of the DAMEA necessary for the reaction and which has been pressurized by air or depleted of air to 0.5 to 3 bar, by continuously introducing, at a temperature of 35 to 65°C, the quaternizing agent of formula (II) and the water and finally the remaining DAMEA, until the desired concentration of the salt of the compound of formula (I) in the water is obtained,

wherein

- the start of the introduction of the water beginning when 0-30% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added;

- the start of the introduction of the remaining DAMEA ~~beginning~~ begins when 20-80% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added; and
- it being possible for the pressure at the end of the reaction to reach 9 bar; then
- (b) the reactor is depressurized while keeping the oxygen content constant by simultaneous introduction of air and ~~end~~, after returning to atmospheric pressure, the residual quaternizing agent is removed, and

wherein no stabilizer is used in the process as a reagent and optionally a sequestering agent is used as a reagent.

2. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out at a temperature of 40 to 60°C.

3. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the ~~reaction is carried out with a pressure which,~~ at the end of the reaction[[₅]] reaches 4 to 7 bar.

4. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the introduction of the water is started when 10-20% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added.

5. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the introduction of the remaining DAMEA is started when 30-70% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added.

6. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the quaternizing agent is introduced over a period of time of 1-7 hours, the water over a period of time of 1-8 hours and the remaining DAMEA over a period of time of 2-8 hours.

7. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out with a molar ratio of the quaternizing agent to the DAMEA of 1 to 1.1.

8. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out with a mean ratio of water/quaternizing agent throughput of 0.2-1.5; a mean ratio of remaining DAMEA/quaternizing agent throughput of 2.5-5; and a mean ratio of water/remaining DAMEA throughput of 0.2-1.2.

9. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, which results ~~resulting~~ in an aqueous solution having a concentration of quaternary salt of formula (I) of 50 to 85% by weight.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 10, carried out in the presence ~~in addition~~ of at least one sequestering agent for metals which is diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, the pentasodium salt of diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, N-(hydroxyethyl)-ethylenediaminetriacetic acid or the trisodium salt of N-(hydroxyethyl)ethylenediaminetriacetic acid, the content of sequestering agent(s) being 1 to 100 ppm, with respect to the aqueous solution of quaternary salt of formula (I).

12. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the residual quaternizing agent is removed by stripping with air.

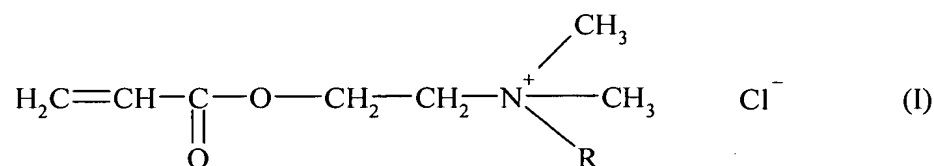
13. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out with a molar ratio of the quaternizing agent to the DAMEA of 1 to 1.05.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 10, carried out in the presence ~~in addition~~ of at least one sequestering agent for metals which is diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, the pentasodium salt of diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, N-(hydroxyethyl)-ethylenediaminetriacetic acid or the trisodium salt of N-

(hydroxyethyl)ethylenediaminetriacetic acid, the content of sequestering agent(s) being 5 to 30 ppm, with respect to the aqueous solution of quaternary salt of formula (I).

16. (New) A process for preparing an aqueous solution of unsaturated quaternary ammonium salt of formula I



in which R represents a methyl or benzyl radical, comprising reacting, in the presence of water, N,N-dimethyl-aminoethyl acrylate (DAMEA) with a quaternizing agent of formula II



in which R is as defined above, wherein:

- (a) the reaction is carried out in a closed reactor, which comprises 5-60% of the amount by weight of the DAMEA necessary for the reaction and which has been pressurized by air or depleted of air to 0.5 to 3 bar, by continuously introducing, at a temperature of 35 to 65°C, the quaternizing agent of formula (II) and the water and finally the remaining DAMEA, until the desired concentration of the salt of the compound of formula (I) in the water is obtained,

wherein

- the start of the introduction of the water beginning when 0-30% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added;

- the start of the introduction of the remaining DAMEA begins when 20-80% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added; and
 - it being possible for the pressure at the end of the reaction to reach 9 bar; then
- (b) the reactor is depressurized while keeping the oxygen content constant by simultaneous introduction of air and, after returning to atmospheric pressure, the residual quaternizing agent is removed, and
- wherein no stabilizer and no sequestering agent are used.

17. (New) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the reaction is carried out at a temperature of 40 to 60°C.

18. (New) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the pressure at the end of the reaction reaches 4 to 7 bar.

19. (New) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the introduction of the water is started when 10-20% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added.

20. (New) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the introduction of the remaining DAMEA is started when 30-70% of the amount by weight of the quaternizing agent of formula (II) necessary for the reaction has been added.

21. (New) The process as claimed in claim 16, wherein the quaternizing agent is introduced over a period of time of 1-7 hours, the water over a period of time of 1-8 hours and the remaining DAMEA over a period of time of 2-8 hours.

22. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out with a molar ratio of the quaternizing agent to the DAMEA of 1 to 1.1.

23. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out with a mean ratio of water/quaternizing agent throughput of 0.2-1.5; a mean ratio of remaining DAMEA/quaternizing agent throughput of 2.5-5; and a mean ratio of water/remaining DAMEA throughput of 0.2-1.2.

24. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, which results in an aqueous solution having a concentration of quaternary salt of formula (I) of 50 to 85% by weight.

25. (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out with a molar ratio of the quaternizing agent to the DAMEA of 1 to 1.05.